



US009423913B2

(12) **United States Patent**  
**Mankowski et al.**

(10) **Patent No.:** **US 9,423,913 B2**  
(45) **Date of Patent:** **Aug. 23, 2016**

- (54) **PERFORMANCE CONTROL OF AMBIENT LIGHT SENSORS**
- (71) Applicant: **BlackBerry Limited**, Waterloo (CA)
- (72) Inventors: **Peter Mankowski**, Waterloo (CA);  
**Jack Idzik**, Kenilworth (CA)
- (73) Assignee: **BlackBerry Limited**, Waterloo, Ontario (CA)
- (\*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 183 days.

7,618,323 B2	11/2009	Rothschild et al.
7,620,316 B2	11/2009	Boillot
8,035,614 B2	10/2011	Bell et al.
8,363,157 B1	1/2013	Han
8,694,062 B2	4/2014	Omerovic
8,964,062 B1	2/2015	Neglur
9,063,574 B1	6/2015	Ivanchenko
2002/0093491 A1	7/2002	Gillespie et al.
2003/0112228 A1	6/2003	Gillespie et al.
2003/0156100 A1	8/2003	Gettemy
2004/0178997 A1	9/2004	Gillespie et al.
2004/0190776 A1	9/2004	Higaki et al.
2006/0013440 A1	1/2006	Cohen et al.
2006/0092142 A1	5/2006	Gillespie et al.
2006/0139185 A1	6/2006	Bonnat et al.

(Continued)

(21) Appl. No.: **13/932,235**

#### FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

(22) Filed: **Jul. 1, 2013**

EP	0538705 A1	4/1993
EP	2226710 A2	9/2010
WO	2012140593 A2	10/2012

(65) **Prior Publication Data**

#### OTHER PUBLICATIONS

US 2015/0002471 A1 Jan. 1, 2015

Liao et al., "PACER: Fine-grained Interactive Paper via Camera-touch Hybrid Gestures on a Cell Phone", CHI 2010: Displays Where You Least Expect Them, Apr. 10-15, 2010, pp. 1-10.

(Continued)

- (51) **Int. Cl.**  
**G06F 3/042** (2006.01)  
**G06F 3/041** (2006.01)
- (52) **U.S. Cl.**  
CPC ..... **G06F 3/0421** (2013.01); **G06F 3/0416** (2013.01)
- (58) **Field of Classification Search**  
CPC .... G06F 3/0412; G06F 3/0421; G06F 3/017; G06F 3/0416  
USPC ..... 345/175  
See application file for complete search history.

*Primary Examiner* — Gustavo Polo

(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm* — Conley Rose, P.C.; J. Robert Brown, Jr.

(56) **References Cited**

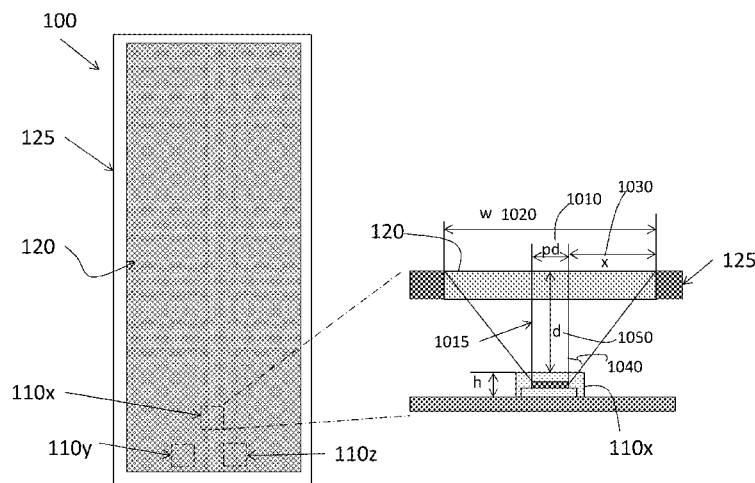
#### U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

5,252,951 A	10/1993	Tannenbaum et al.
5,554,912 A	9/1996	Thayer et al.
5,594,469 A	1/1997	Freeman et al.
6,693,612 B1	2/2004	Matsumoto et al.
6,699,093 B1	3/2004	Cacciola et al.

#### (57) **ABSTRACT**

A device and method to control measurements of light intensity are described. The device includes two or more ambient light sensors arranged at respective surface locations of the device, each of the two or more ambient light sensors measuring the light intensity at the respective surface location. The device also includes a processor to control operation of the two or more ambient light sensors.

**19 Claims, 10 Drawing Sheets**





(56)

## References Cited

## U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

- 2006/0187214 A1 8/2006 Gillespie et al.  
 2006/0279548 A1 12/2006 Geaghan  
 2007/0075965 A1 4/2007 Huppi et al.  
 2007/0120996 A1 5/2007 Boillot  
 2007/0130547 A1 6/2007 Boillot  
 2007/0259716 A1 11/2007 Mattice et al.  
 2007/0259717 A1 11/2007 Mattice et al.  
 2007/0296867 A1 12/2007 Park  
 2008/0005703 A1 1/2008 Radivojevic et al.  
 2008/0041640 A1 2/2008 Gillespie et al.  
 2008/0042994 A1 2/2008 Gillespie et al.  
 2008/0048997 A1 2/2008 Gillespie et al.  
 2008/0122803 A1 5/2008 Izadi et al.  
 2008/0134102 A1 6/2008 Movold et al.  
 2008/0165145 A1 7/2008 Herz et al.  
 2008/0165160 A1 7/2008 Kocienda et al.  
 2008/0167834 A1 7/2008 Herz et al.  
 2008/0168402 A1 7/2008 Blumenberg  
 2008/0266083 A1 10/2008 Midholt et al.  
 2009/0031258 A1 1/2009 Arrasvuori et al.  
 2009/0051648 A1 2/2009 Shamaie et al.  
 2009/0058830 A1 3/2009 Herz et al.  
 2009/0074248 A1 3/2009 Cohen et al.  
 2009/0077504 A1 3/2009 Bell et al.  
 2009/0100383 A1 4/2009 Sunday et al.  
 2009/0139778 A1 6/2009 Butler et al.  
 2009/0146982 A1 6/2009 Thielman et al.  
 2009/0189858 A1 7/2009 Lev et al.  
 2009/0195497 A1 8/2009 Fitzgerald et al.  
 2010/0027843 A1 2/2010 Wilson  
 2010/0060611 A1 3/2010 Nie  
 2010/0090947 A1 4/2010 Underkoffler et al.  
 2010/0150399 A1 6/2010 Svajda et al.  
 2010/0153996 A1 6/2010 Migos et al.  
 2010/0156676 A1 6/2010 Mooring et al.  
 2010/0177060 A1 7/2010 Han  
 2010/0188328 A1 7/2010 Dodge et al.  
 2010/0192105 A1 7/2010 Kim et al.  
 2010/0244751 A1 9/2010 Van Endert  
 2010/0245289 A1 9/2010 Svajda  
 2010/0253241 A1 10/2010 Van Endert  
 2010/0277073 A1 11/2010 Van Endert  
 2010/0313050 A1 12/2010 Harrat et al.  
 2010/0325575 A1 12/2010 Platzner et al.  
 2011/0010626 A1 1/2011 Fino et al.  
 2011/0029913 A1 2/2011 Boillot et al.  
 2011/0096009 A1 4/2011 Kurokawa et al.  
 2011/0140610 A1 6/2011 Van Endert  
 2011/0157016 A1 6/2011 Chang  
 2011/0163947 A1 7/2011 Shaw et al.  
 2011/0167391 A1 7/2011 Momeyer et al.  
 2011/0180709 A1 7/2011 Craddock et al.  
 2011/0182519 A1 7/2011 Craddock et al.  
 2011/0185309 A1 7/2011 Challinor et al.  
 2011/0187640 A1 8/2011 Jacobsen et al.  
 2011/0205186 A1 8/2011 Newton et al.  
 2011/0211073 A1 9/2011 Foster  
 2011/0215733 A1 9/2011 Van Endert  
 2011/0221666 A1 9/2011 Newton et al.  
 2011/0221669 A1 9/2011 Shams et al.  
 2011/0248151 A1 10/2011 Holcombe et al.  
 2011/0248961 A1 10/2011 Svajda et al.  
 2011/0254864 A1 10/2011 Tsuchikawa et al.  
 2011/0291988 A1 12/2011 Bamji et al.  
 2011/0296353 A1 12/2011 Ahmed et al.  
 2011/0298754 A1 12/2011 Bove et al.  
 2011/0306304 A1 12/2011 Forutanpour et al.  
 2011/0310005 A1 12/2011 Chen et al.  
 2011/0314429 A1 12/2011 Blumenberg  
 2011/0314430 A1 12/2011 Blumenberg  
 2012/0007821 A1 1/2012 Zaliva  
 2012/0007833 A1 1/2012 Liu et al.  
 2012/0013529 A1 1/2012 McGibney et al.  
 2012/0013539 A1 1/2012 Hogan et al.  
 2012/0013540 A1 1/2012 Hogan  
 2012/0023443 A1 1/2012 Blumenberg  
 2012/0023460 A1 1/2012 Blumenberg  
 2012/0023461 A1 1/2012 Blumenberg  
 2012/0023509 A1 1/2012 Blumenberg  
 2012/0050007 A1 3/2012 Forutanpour et al.  
 2012/0056804 A1 3/2012 Radivojevic et al.  
 2012/0089948 A1 4/2012 Lim et al.  
 2012/0133580 A1 5/2012 Kirby et al.  
 2012/0162636 A1 6/2012 Sy  
 2012/0176303 A1 7/2012 Miyake  
 2012/0176401 A1 7/2012 Hayward et al.  
 2012/0200486 A1 8/2012 Meinel et al.  
 2012/0206339 A1 8/2012 Dahl  
 2012/0242584 A1 9/2012 Tuli  
 2012/0242852 A1 9/2012 Hayward et al.  
 2012/0245886 A1 9/2012 Zhang et al.  
 2012/0280107 A1 11/2012 Skurnik et al.  
 2012/0280900 A1 11/2012 Wang et al.  
 2012/0280904 A1 11/2012 Skurnik et al.  
 2012/0280905 A1 11/2012 Vonog et al.  
 2012/0281129 A1 11/2012 Wang et al.  
 2012/0282974 A1 11/2012 Green et al.  
 2012/0287044 A1 11/2012 Bell et al.  
 2012/0293404 A1 11/2012 Federico et al.  
 2012/0306815 A1 12/2012 Su et al.  
 2012/0312956 A1 12/2012 Chang et al.  
 2012/0317511 A1 12/2012 Bell  
 2013/0002538 A1 1/2013 Mooring et al.  
 2013/0002601 A1 1/2013 McCracken  
 2013/0004016 A1 1/2013 Karakotsios et al.  
 2013/0009896 A1 1/2013 Zaliva  
 2013/0022214 A1 1/2013 Dickins et al.  
 2013/0033418 A1 2/2013 Bevilacqua et al.  
 2013/0034265 A1 2/2013 Nakasu et al.  
 2013/0053007 A1 2/2013 Cosman et al.  
 2013/0067419 A1 3/2013 Eltoft  
 2013/0083252 A1 4/2013 Boyes  
 2013/0091561 A1 4/2013 Bruso et al.  
 2013/0093727 A1 4/2013 Eriksson et al.  
 2013/0100036 A1 4/2013 Papakipos et al.  
 2013/0102366 A1 4/2013 Teng et al.  
 2013/0145535 A1 6/2013 Parsons et al.  
 2013/0167221 A1 6/2013 Vukosavljev et al.  
 2013/0182246 A1 7/2013 Tanase  
 2013/0307949 A1 11/2013 Zhang et al.  
 2013/0328761 A1 12/2013 Boulanger et al.  
 2013/0328842 A1 12/2013 Barnhoefer et al.  
 2014/0118257 A1 5/2014 Baldwin  
 2014/0237432 A1 8/2014 Geurts et al.  
 2014/0253427 A1 9/2014 Gruhlke et al.  
 2014/0306877 A1 10/2014 Katz et al.  
 2015/0009290 A1 1/2015 Mankowski et al.

## OTHER PUBLICATIONS

- Mankowski, Peter, et al.; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,470, filed Jul. 1, 2013; Title: Gesture Detection Using Ambient Light Sensors.  
 Mankowski, Peter; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,243, filed Jul. 1, 2013; Title: Password by Touch-Less Gesture.  
 Mankowski, Peter; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,250; filed Jul. 1, 2013; Title: Touch-Less User Interface Using Ambient Light Sensors.  
 Mankowski, Peter, et al.; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,487, filed Jul. 1, 2013; Title: Gesture Detection Using Ambient Light Sensors.  
 Mankowski, Peter; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,260, filed Jul. 1, 2013; Title: Camera Control Using Ambient Light Sensors.  
 Mankowski, Peter, et al.; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,271, filed Jul. 1, 2013; Title: Display Navigation Using Touch-Less Gestures.  
 Mankowski, Peter; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,280, filed Jul. 1, 2013; Title: Alarm Operation by Touch-Less Gesture.  
 Mankowski, Peter, et al.; U.S. Appl. No. 13/937,444, filed Jul. 9, 2013; Title: Operating a Device Using Touchless and Touchscreen Gestures.  
 Carmel-Veilleux, Tennessee; U.S. Appl. No. 14/019,740, filed Sep. 6, 2013; Title: Device Having Light Intensity Measurement in Presence of Shadows; 27 pages.  
 Holenarsipur, Prashanth, et al.; "Ambient-Light Sensing Optimizes Visibility and Battery Life of Portable Displays"; Maxim; Application Note 5051; Jun. 20, 2011; 7 pages.



(56)

**References Cited****OTHER PUBLICATIONS**

Office Action dated Dec. 15, 2014; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,243, filed Jul. 1, 2013; 29 pages.

Office Action dated Sep. 3, 2014; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,260, filed Jul. 1, 2013; 48 pages.

Office Action dated Nov. 20, 2014; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,271, filed Jul. 1, 2013; 35 pages.

Office Action dated Oct. 29, 2014; U.S. Appl. No. 13/937,444, filed Jul. 9, 2013; 28 pages.

European Extended Search Report; Application No. 14183709.6; Jan. 26, 2015; 7 pages.

Extended European Search Report for EP Application No. 13174561.4-1960, dated Jan. 3, 2014, pp. 1-8.

Extended European Search Report for EP Application No. 13174558.0-1960, dated Jan. 3, 2014, pp. 1-10.

Extended European Search Report for EP Application No. 13174576.2-1960, dated Jan. 3, 2014, pp. 1-12.

Extended European Search Report for EP Application No. 13174560.6-1960, dated Jan. 3, 2014, pp. 1-10.

Extended European Search Report for EP Application No. 13174575.4-1960, dated Jan. 3, 2014, pp. 1-9.

Extended European Search Report for EP Application No. 13175807.0-1960, dated Jan. 15, 2014, pp. 1-7.

Mankowski, Peter, et al.; U.S. Appl. No. 13/949,748, filed Jul. 24, 2013; Title: Backlight for Touchless Gesture Detection.

Mankowski, Peter, et al.; U.S. Appl. No. 13/949,727, filed Jul. 24, 2013; Title: Backlight for Touchless Gesture Detection.

EE Times; "Ambient Light Sensors Adjust LCD Brightness to Save Battery Power"; [http://www.eetimes.com/document.asp?doc\\_id=1302779&print=yes](http://www.eetimes.com/document.asp?doc_id=1302779&print=yes); Dec. 26, 2006; 2 pages.

Rohm Semiconductor; "Ambient Light Sensor (ALS) Applications in Portable Electronics"; [http://www.rohm.com/documents/11303/41217/CNA09016\\_wp.pdf](http://www.rohm.com/documents/11303/41217/CNA09016_wp.pdf); Jul. 24, 2013; 9 pages.

European Extended Search Report; Application No. 14178207.8; Dec. 23, 2014; 6 pages.

Office Action dated Jun. 2, 2015; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,487, filed Jul. 1, 2013; 47 pages.

Final Office Action dated Mar. 4, 2015; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,260, filed Jul. 1, 2013; 55 pages.

Final Office Action dated Mar. 31, 2015; U.S. Appl. No. 13/937,444, filed Jul. 9, 2013; 20 pages.

Office Action dated May 14, 2015; U.S. Appl. No. 13/949,748, filed Jul. 24, 2013; 50 pages.

Office Action dated Apr. 14, 2015; U.S. Appl. No. 13/949,727, filed Jul. 24, 2013; 44 pages.

Pyreos, "Pioneering Low Power Gesture Sensor Enabling Touchless Control for Mobile Devices" [online]; retrieved Jun. 27, 2013; retrieved from <http://www.pyreos.com/images/downloads/Applications/Touchless%20Gesture%20Control/Gesture%20Sensor%20FAQs.pdf> pp. 1-2.

Silicon Labs, "Touchless Gesturing Brings New Innovation to Electronic Product Designs" [online]; retrieved Jun. 27, 2013; retrieved from <http://www.silabs.com/Support%20Documents/TechnicalDocs/TouchlessSensorIC-WP.pdf> pp. 1-4.

Taos, "Light-to-Digital Converter" The Lumenology Company, TAOS132, Mar. 2012, pp. 1-24.

Extended European Search Report for EP Application No. 13174565.5-1959, dated Dec. 6, 2013, pp. 1-7.

Extended European Search Report for EP Application No. 13174557.2-1956, dated Dec. 13, 2013, pp. 1-7.

Extended European Search Report for EP Application No. 13174577.0-1560 dated Dec. 13, 2013, pp. 1-7.

Notice of Allowance dated Nov. 6, 2015; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,470, filed Jul. 1, 2013; 13 pages.

Final Office Action dated Sep. 8, 2015; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,243, filed Jul. 1, 2013; 14 pages.

Notice of Allowance dated Sep. 29, 2015; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,487, filed Jul. 1, 2013; 16 pages.

Final Office Action dated Nov. 24, 2015; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,260, filed Jul. 1, 2013; 36 pages.

Advisory Action dated Sep. 10, 2015; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,271, filed Jul. 1, 2013; 3 pages.

Office Action dated Nov. 4, 2015; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,271, filed Jul. 1, 2013; 21 pages.

Office Action dated Oct. 9, 2015; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,280, filed Jul. 1, 2013; 13 pages.

Office Action dated Sep. 18, 2015; U.S. Appl. No. 13/937,444, filed Jul. 9, 2013; 18 pages.

Final Office Action dated Nov. 20, 2015; U.S. Appl. No. 13/949,748, filed Jul. 24, 2013; 19 pages.

Advisory Action dated Oct. 27, 2015; U.S. Appl. No. 13/949,727, filed Jul. 24, 2013; 3 pages.

Office Action dated Jun. 30, 2015; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,470, filed Jul. 1, 2013; 51 pages.

Final Office Action dated Jun. 5, 2015; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,243, filed Jul. 1, 2013; 10 pages.

Office Action dated Jun. 11, 2015; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,250, filed Jul. 1, 2013; 53 pages.

Office Action dated Jul. 27, 2015; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,260, filed Jul. 1, 2013; 70 pages.

Final Office Action dated Jun. 18, 2015; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,271, filed Jul. 1, 2013; 34 pages.

Office Action dated Jun. 29, 2015; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,280, filed Jul. 1, 2013; 45 pages.

Advisory Action dated Jun. 8, 2015; U.S. Appl. No. 13/937,444, filed Jul. 9, 2013; 6 pages.

Final Office Action dated Aug. 21, 2015; U.S. Appl. No. 13/949,727, filed Jul. 24, 2013; 17 pages.

Notice of Allowance dated Jul. 22, 2015; U.S. Appl. No. 14/019,740, filed Sep. 6, 2013; 39 pages.

Notice of Allowance dated Jan. 11, 2016; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,243, filed Jul. 1, 2013; 25 pages.

Final Office Action dated Dec. 21, 2015; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,250, filed Jul. 1, 2013; 31 pages.

Advisory Action dated Mar. 2, 2016; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,250, filed Jul. 1, 2013; 3 pages.

Advisory Action dated Feb. 9, 2016; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,260, filed Jul. 1, 2013; 8 pages.

Notice of Allowance dated Feb. 17, 2016; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,280, filed Jul. 1, 2013; 12 pages.

Notice of Allowance dated Mar. 18, 2016; U.S. Appl. No. 13/937,444, filed Jul. 9, 2013; 15 pages.

Notice of Allowance dated Feb. 1, 2016; U.S. Appl. No. 13/949,748, filed Jul. 24, 2013; 13 pages.

Advisory Action dated Dec. 31, 2015; U.S. Appl. No. 13/949,727, filed Jul. 24, 2013; 13 pages.

Advisory Action dated Feb. 25, 2016; U.S. Appl. No. 13/949,727, filed Jul. 24, 2013; 2 pages.

Office Action dated Mar. 9, 2016; U.S. Appl. No. 13/949,727, filed Jul. 24, 2013; 10 pages.

European Examination Report; Application No. 13174565.5; Feb. 18, 2016; 8 pages.

Cheng, Heng-Tze, et al.; "Contactless Gesture Recognition System Using Proximity Sensors"; Carnegie Mellon University; [http://repository.cmu.edu/silicon\\_valley/17/](http://repository.cmu.edu/silicon_valley/17/); 2010; 2 pages.

Office Action dated Jun. 23, 2016; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,250, filed Jul. 1, 2013; 38 pages.

Notice of Allowance dated Jun. 20, 2016; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,271, filed Jul. 1, 2013; 16 pages.

Mankowski, Peter; U.S. Appl. No. 15/142,944, filed Apr. 29, 2016; Title: Password by Touch-Less Gesture; 47 pages.

Advisory Action dated Apr. 26, 2016; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,250, filed Jul. 1, 2013; 5 pages.

Notice of Allowance dated Mar. 21, 2016; U.S. Appl. No. 13/932,260, filed Jul. 1, 2013; 68 pages.



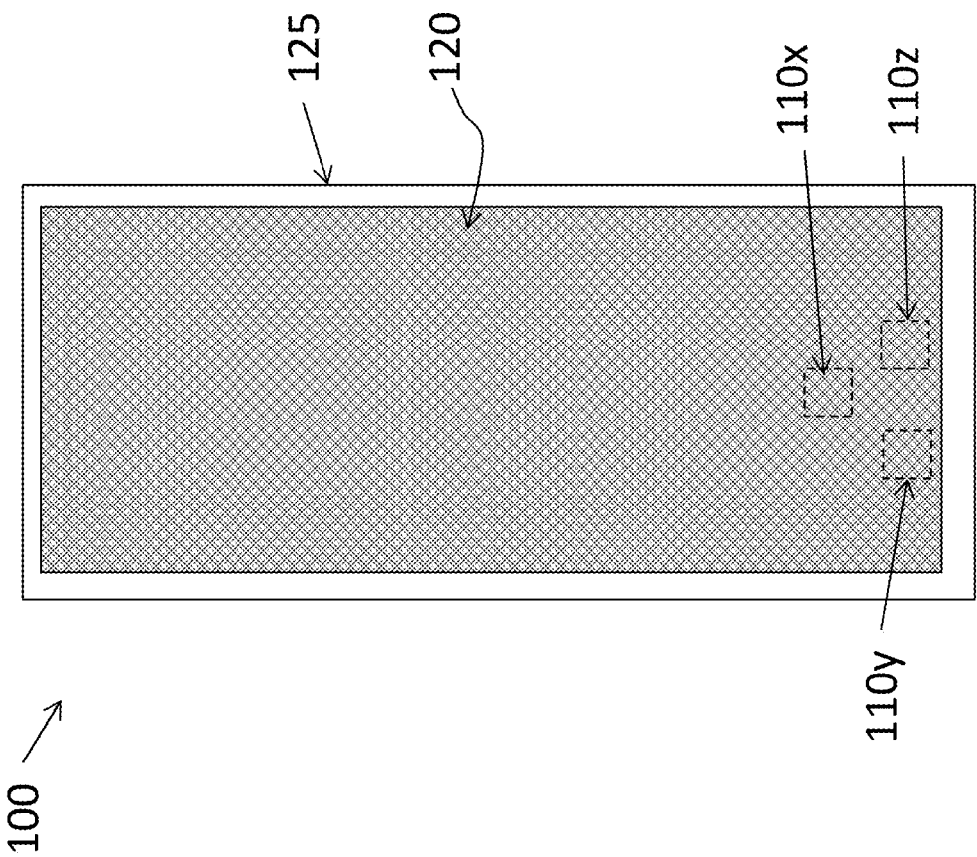


FIG. 1



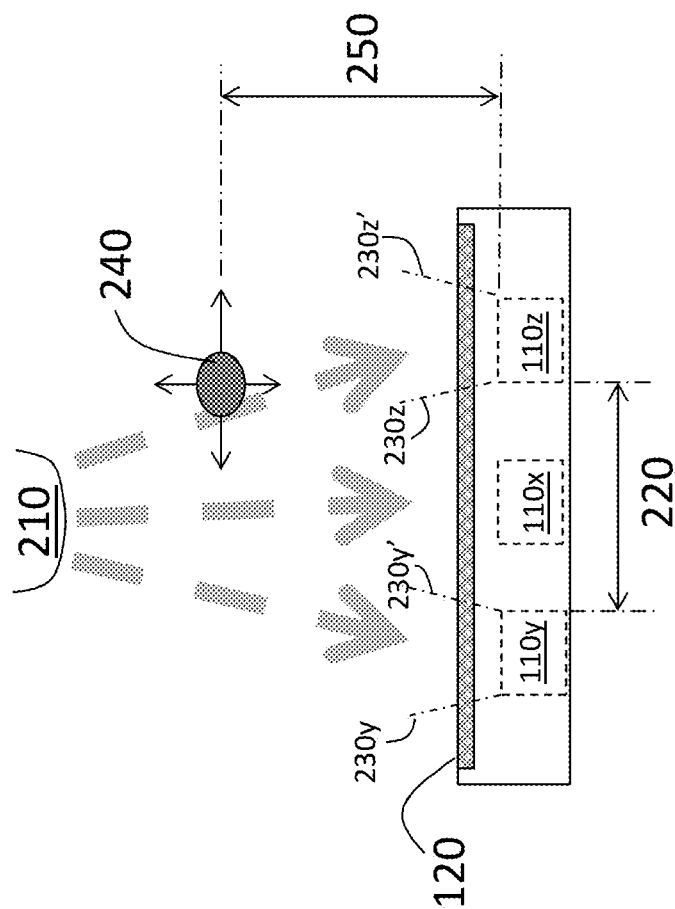


FIG. 2



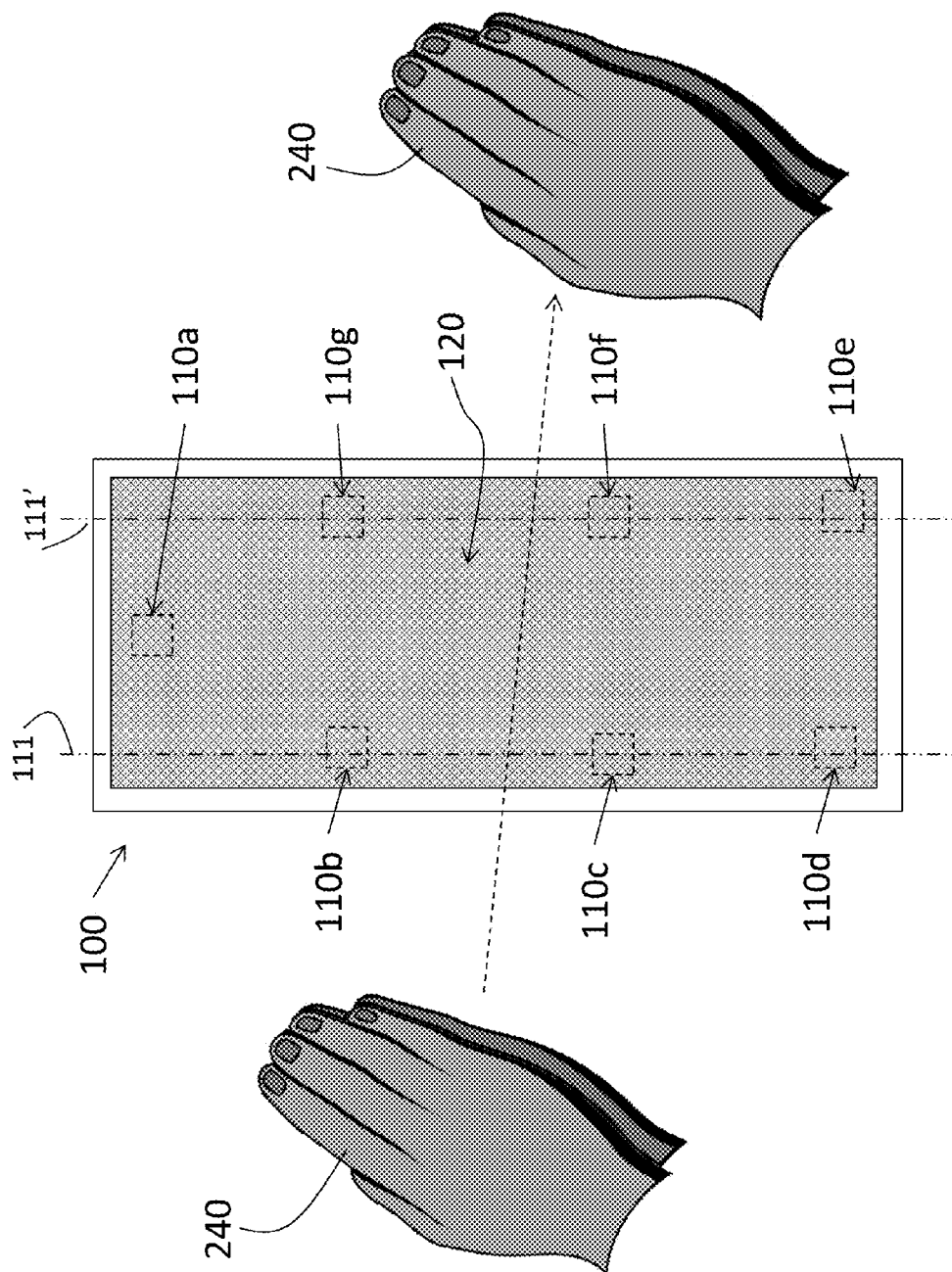


FIG. 3



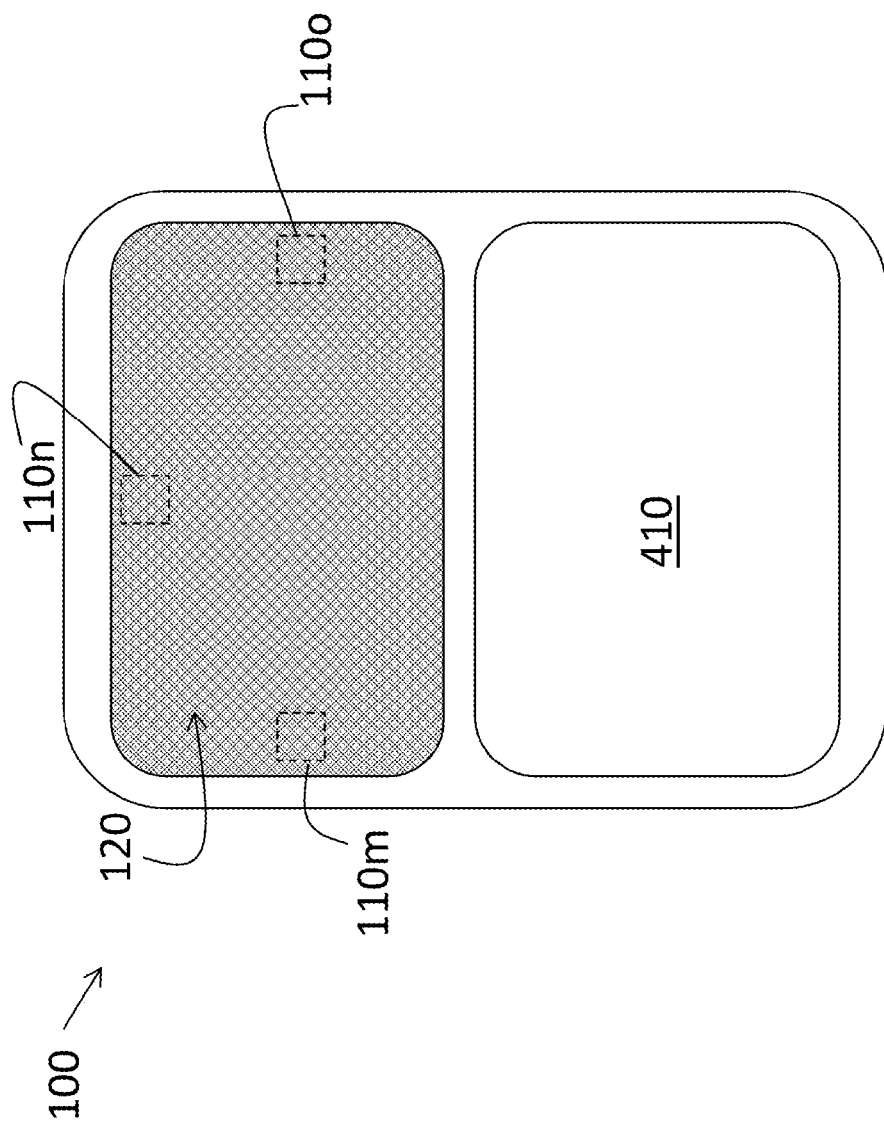


FIG. 4



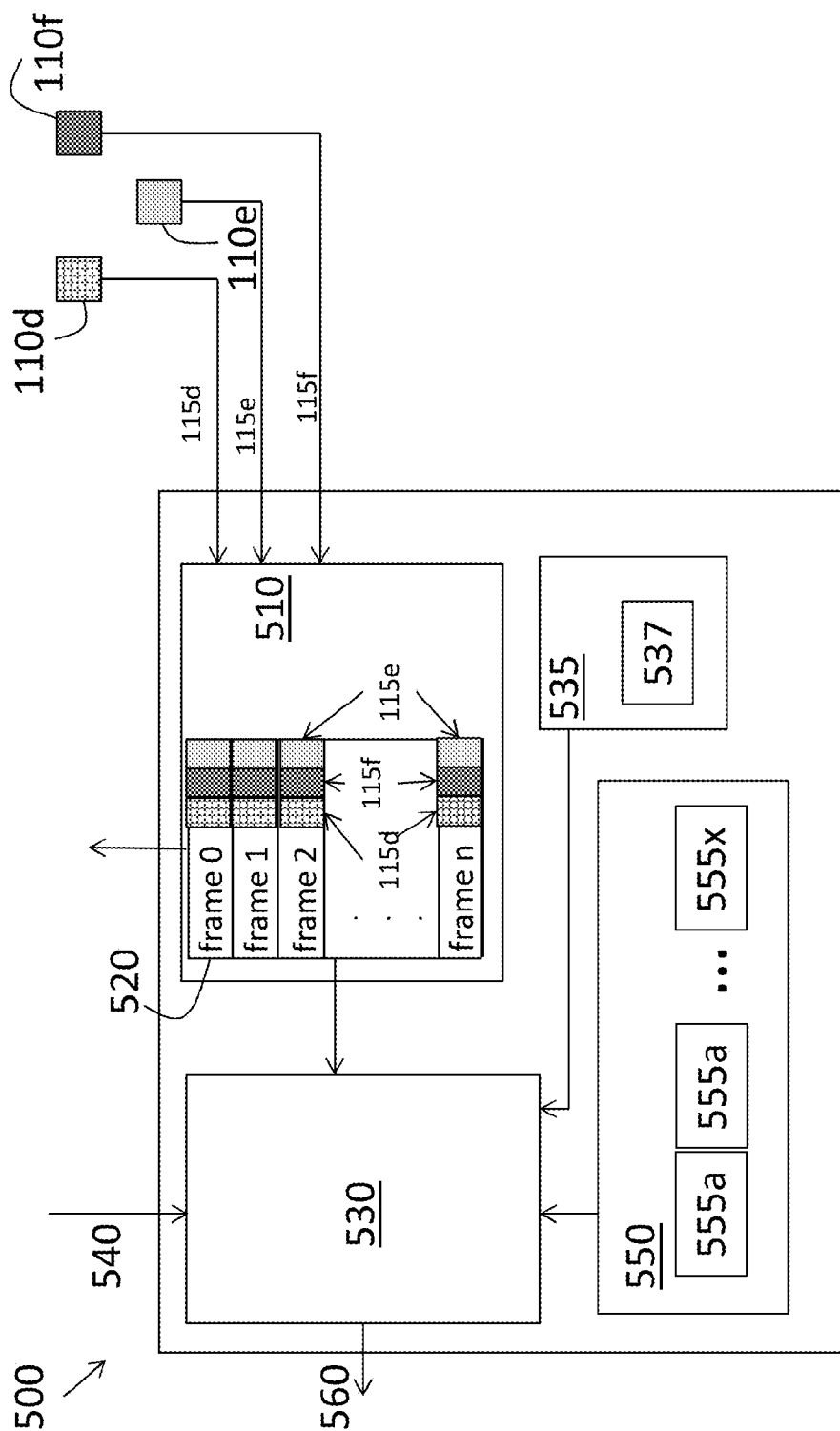


FIG. 5



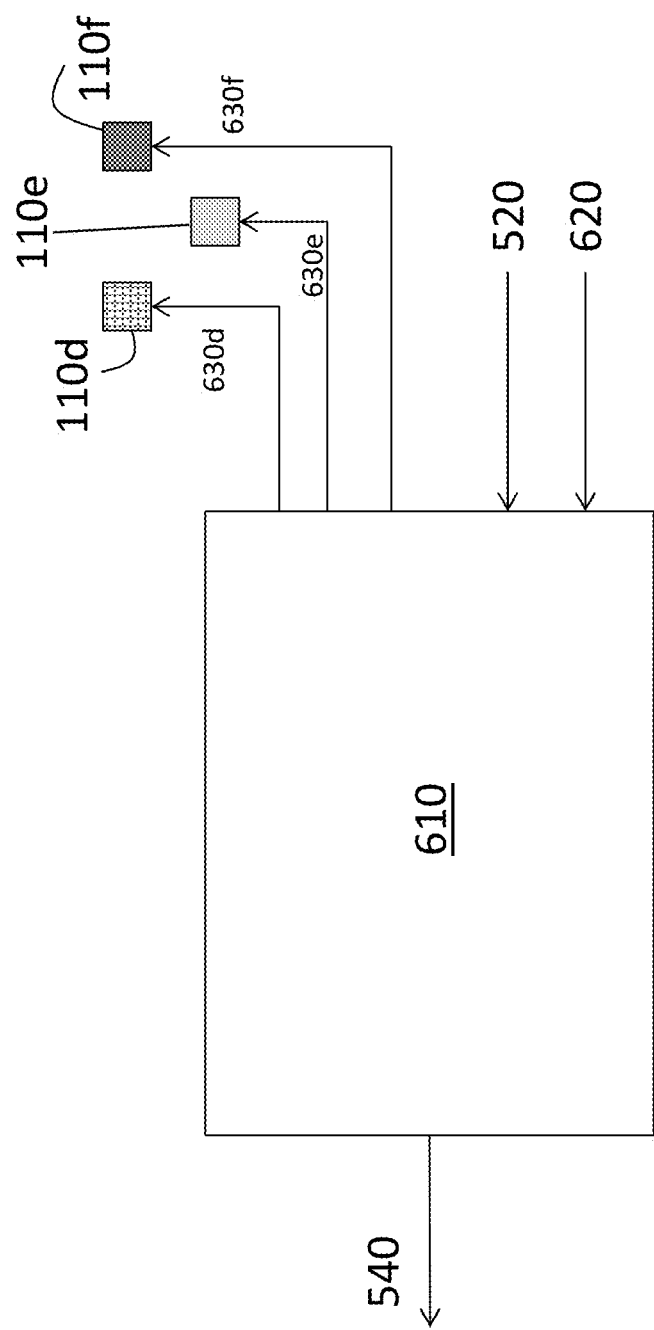
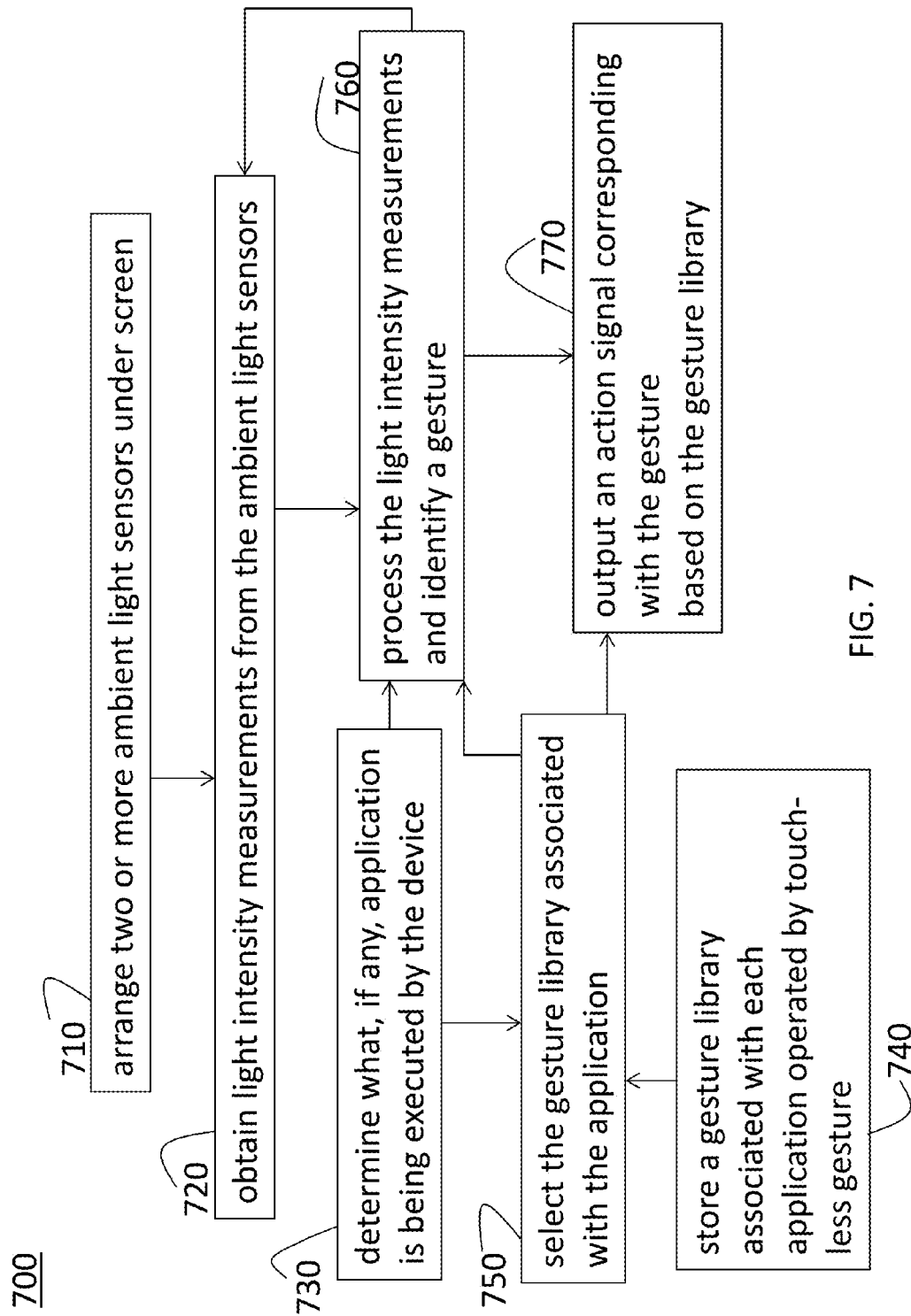


FIG. 6







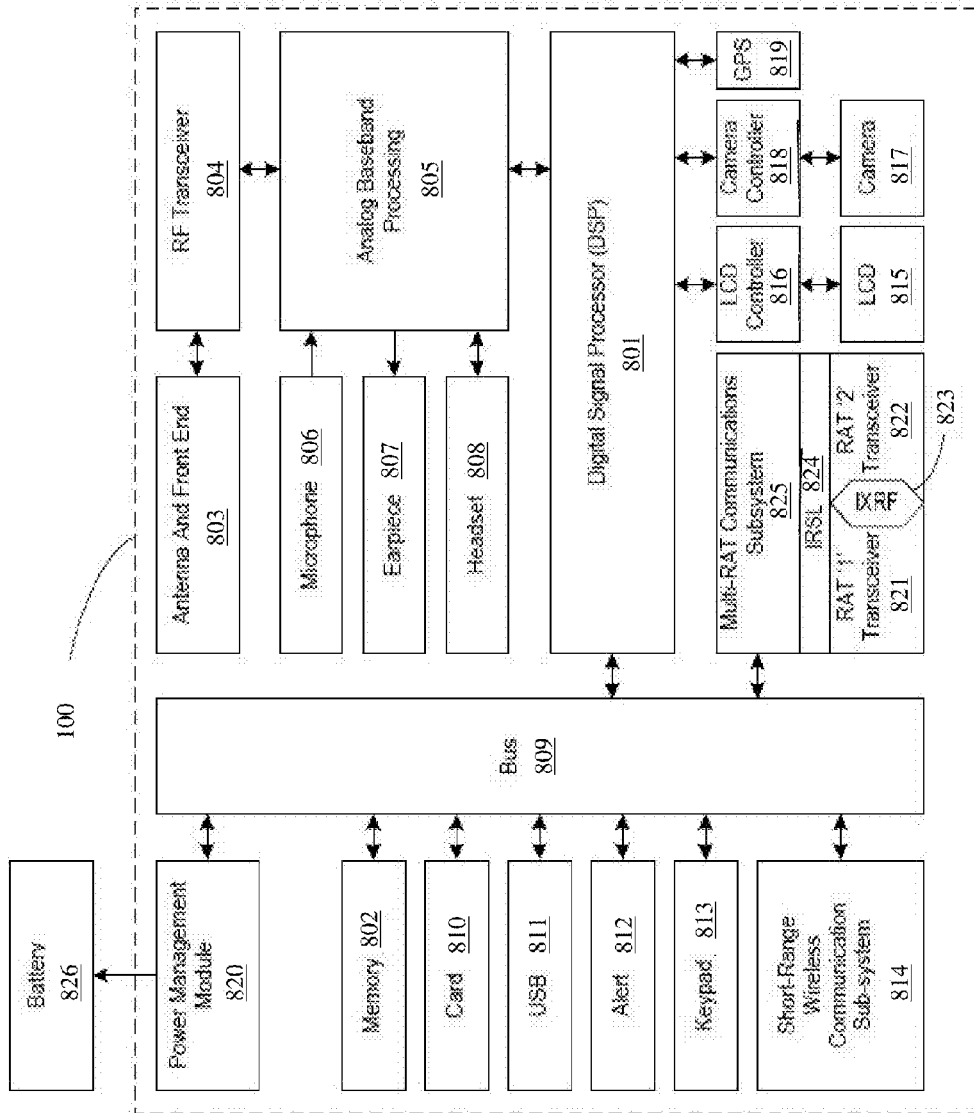


FIG. 8



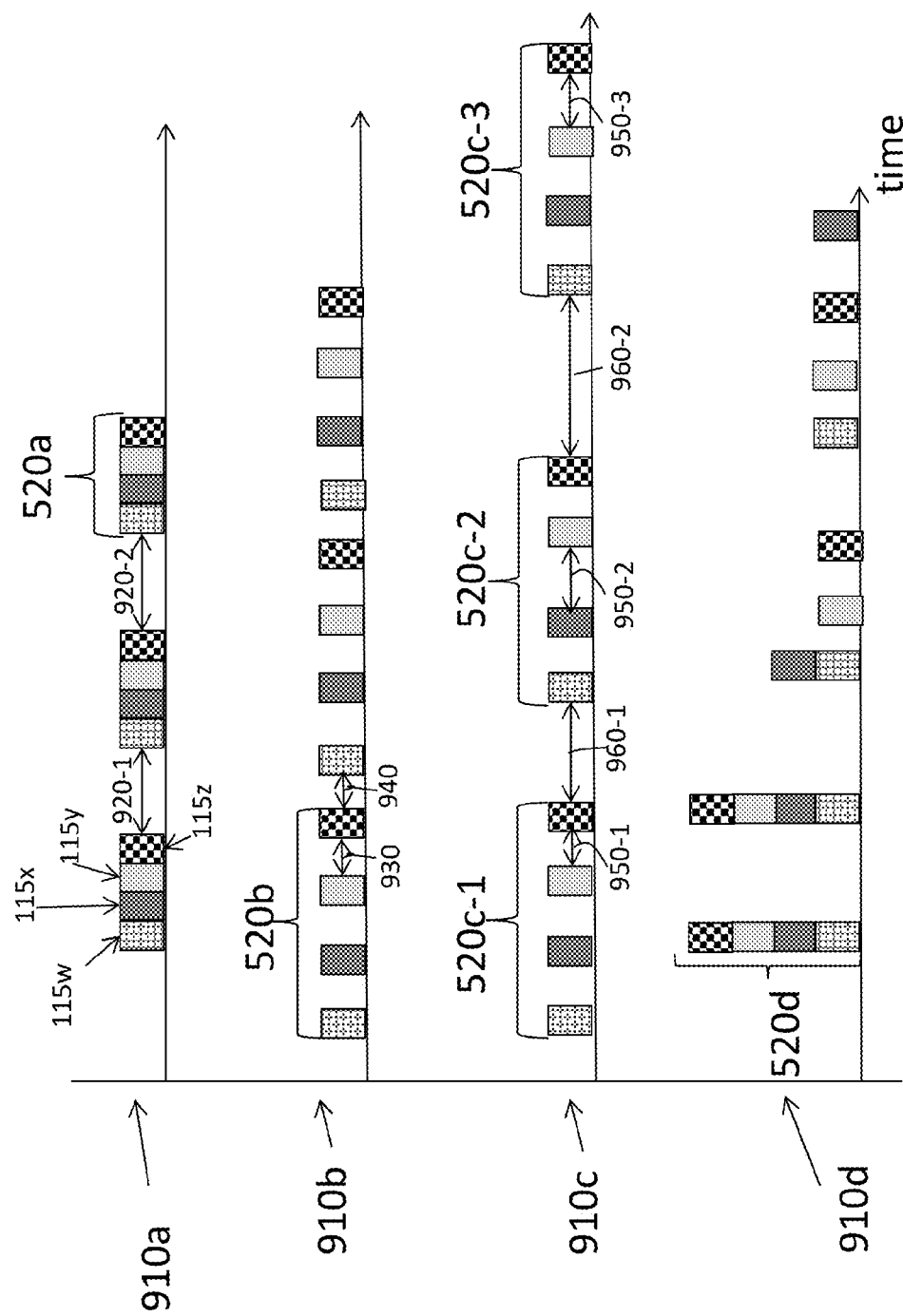
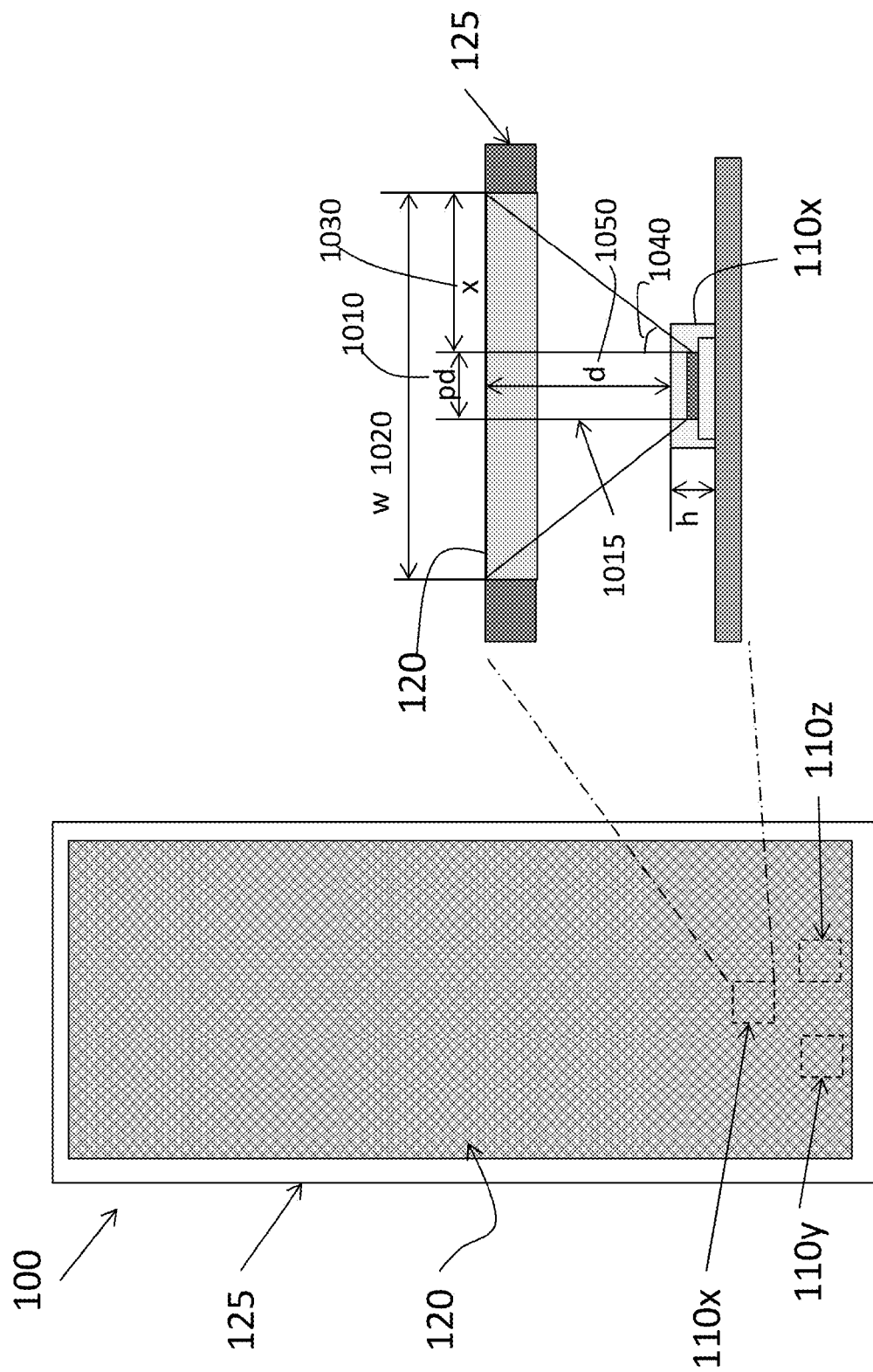


FIG. 9







1

## PERFORMANCE CONTROL OF AMBIENT LIGHT SENSORS

### BACKGROUND

An ambient light sensor may be used to adjust the backlighting of the display in many computation and communication devices, such as smart phones, laptop computers, tablets, and the like. Several factors may affect the performance of an ambient light sensor. For example, when the ambient (available) light is provided by a light source powered by alternating current (ac), the power lines exhibit varying light intensity over time according to a phenomenon referred to as ac ripple or ac flicker. This flicker may affect performance of an ambient light sensor. As another example, when the ambient light sensor is disposed under a glass screen of a device, a smudge on the screen caused by a finger print may also affect performance.

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

For a more complete understanding of this disclosure, reference is now made to the following brief description, taken in connection with the accompanying drawings and detailed description, wherein like reference numerals represent like parts.

FIG. 1 shows a device including an exemplary arrangement of ambient light sensors;

FIG. 2 depicts another view of the device shown in FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 shows a device including an exemplary arrangement of ambient light sensors according to another embodiment;

FIG. 4 shows a device including an exemplary arrangement of ambient light sensors according to yet another embodiment;

FIG. 5 is a block diagram of a system to process gestures;

FIG. 6 is a block diagram of a system to control the two or more ambient light sensors;

FIG. 7 shows the process flow of a method of detecting a gesture;

FIG. 8 is a block diagram of an exemplary device that facilitates touch-less gesture detection as described herein;

FIG. 9 shows exemplary sampling patterns for ambient light sensors; and

FIG. 10 illustrates a cross-sectional view of one ambient light sensor according to an embodiment.

### DETAILED DESCRIPTION

It should be understood at the outset that although illustrative implementations of one or more embodiments of the present disclosure are provided below, the disclosed systems and/or methods may be implemented using any number of techniques, whether currently known or in existence. The disclosure should in no way be limited to the illustrative implementations, drawings, and techniques illustrated below, including the exemplary designs and implementations illustrated and described herein, but may be modified within the scope of the appended claims along with their full scope of equivalents.

As noted above, several factors may affect the performance of one or more ambient light sensors (ALSs) used in a computation or communication device. Embodiments of a system and method to use ALSs to detect gestures made by an object in touch-less communication with a device are

2

described herein. In addition, embodiments are described regarding control of the ALSs.

FIG. 1 shows a device 100 including an exemplary arrangement of ambient light sensors 110. The device 100 may be any computation, communication, or data storage device such as a tablet, laptop computer, smart phone, music player, storage device, and the like. The view depicted by FIG. 1 shows the screen 120 (e.g., glass or other transparent surface) of the device 100 on a surface of the body 125 that displays information to a user, which can be based on user selections or generated by the device 100. Information generated by the device can include the status of communication connections (mobile network, wifi connection(s), Bluetooth connections, etc.), telephone call, or electronic messages or any combination thereof. The screen 120 can act as the input/output (I/O) between the device 100 and the user. The exemplary device 100 shown in FIG. 1 has a screen 120 that occupies most of one surface of the device 100. Other exemplary devices 100 may instead include a keyboard or other components such that the relative size of the screen 120 to the size of a surface of the device 100 is smaller than shown in FIG. 1 (see e.g., FIG. 4). Three ambient light sensors (ALSs) 110x, 110y, 110z are disposed beneath the screen 120 in FIG. 1. Although the ALSs 110 are shown disposed beneath the screen 120 to protect from environmental and accidental damage, the ALSs 110 receive the same intensity of ambient light or at least sufficient ambient light to detect a change in ambient light whether they are disposed above or below the screen 120, because the screen 120 is a transparent device element that allows ambient light to pass through. The screen 120 includes a glass or polymer exterior layer that may filter or diffuse some light, e.g., certain ranges of light wavelengths. Sufficient light for detection as described herein passes through the exterior layer of the screen 120. The ambient light refers to the available light (brightness and direction of light) in the environment in which the device 100 is being used. As such, the ALSs 110 are passive devices. In an example, the ALSs 110 do not have and are not associated with emitters on the device 100 to provide the light that is detected by the ALSs 110. In a further example, the device 100 does not emit light for the purpose of gesture detection. Ambient light is, in an example, the light present in the environment in which the device is present.

FIG. 2 depicts another view of the device 100 shown in FIG. 1. The view shown by FIG. 2 includes a light source 210. This light source 210 may be the sun, a lamp, or some combination of light sources that provide the available light in a given environment in which the device 100 is being used. If the device 100 is outside during the day, the sun provides the ambient light, which is spread spectrum light. If the device is being used indoors with no exterior windows, the ambient light is generated by indoor lighting systems, e.g. lamps, fluorescent bulbs, incandescent bulbs, LEDs, etc. The ambient light can also be a combination of natural light (e.g., sunlight) and artificial light (e.g., fluorescent light, incandescent light). Each ALS 110 outputs a current level corresponding with the measured light intensity 115 (see e.g., FIG. 5). An analog-to-digital converter may be used to derive a digital output from the ALSs 110. Each of the ALSs 110 may have adjustable sensitivity (adjustable gain setting). Each ALS 110 may also be a spread spectrum sensor with a selectable range of operation among two or more ranges (wavelength bands or ranges). The process entailed in this selection is discussed further below with reference to FIG. 6. The full range of operation of each ALS 110 may be close to the wavelength range of visible light (400 nm to 700 nm).



3

A typical commercially available ALS may detect ambient light in the wavelength range of 350 nm to 700 nm, for example. Because each ALS 110 measures the intensity of the available (ambient) light within its zone of reception (see e.g., 230y and 230y' defining a zone of reception for ALS 110y and 230z and 230z' defining a zone of reception for ALS 110z), the ALS 110 is a passive sensor that does not require a corresponding emitter or transmitter. The zone of reception is typically cone-shaped with the cone dimensions being determined by an angle of half sensitivity. FIG. 2 is a cross-sectional view of an exemplary zone of reception. Each ALS 110 may measure light intensity 115 within its zone of reception in a photometric unit (lux) to provide a measure of lumens per square-meters or in a radiometric unit (irradiance) to provide a measure of watts per square-meters. In the embodiment shown by FIGS. 1 and 2, the three ALSs 110x, 110y, 110z are arranged in a triangular pattern. That is, at least one ALS 110 is offset or not linearly aligned with at least two other ALSs 110.

Through the inclusion of two or more ALSs 110 (e.g., three ALSs 110x, 110y, 110z), the device 100 shown in FIGS. 1 and 2 facilitates detection of a gesture by an object 240 that changes the light intensity 115 (see e.g., FIG. 5) in the zone of detection of one or more of the ALSs 110 due to movement of the object 240. Through the inclusion of three or more ALSs 110 with at least three of the three or more ALSs 110 in a triangular pattern (see e.g., FIG. 1), movement of an object 240 may be discerned in three dimensions. As is further detailed below, a gesture is detected and identified based on the changes in light intensity 115 measured by each of the ALSs 110 at different time instants or measurement cycles due to the movement of the object 240. That is, each of the ALSs 110 measures light intensity 115 simultaneously with the other ALSs 110 at a given time instant or in sequence with the other ALSs 110 for a measurement cycle, and the comparison of light intensity 115 measurements for different time instants or measurement cycles is used to detect a gesture. For example, assuming that the ALSs 110 measure light intensity 115 simultaneously (or near-simultaneously), at the time instant illustrated by FIG. 2, the object 240 is positioned such that the light intensity 115 detected by ALS 110z is affected but the light intensity 115 detected by ALSs 110x and 110y is unaffected by the object 240. Based on a direction of movement of the object 240, the light intensity 115 detected by different ones of the ALSs 110x, 110y, 110z may be affected at different times instants by the position of the object 240. The object 240 may be a hand, one or more fingers, a wand or another non-transparent item that partially or completely blocks the passage of ambient light so that its position may be detected based on the effect on measured light intensity 115.

A touch-free gesture may mimic a swipe, also known as a flick, which can be a particular type of touch on a touch-sensitive display. The swipe or flick may begin at an origin point and continue to an end point, for example, a concluding end of the gesture. A gesture may be identified by attributes or characteristics of the gesture as discussed further below. These attributes may include the origin point (of detection by an ALS 110), the end point, the distance travelled by the object 240, the duration, the velocity, and the direction, for example. A gesture may be long or short in distance and/or duration. Two points of the gesture may be utilized to determine a direction of the gesture. A gesture may also include a hover. A hover may be non-movement of the object 240 at a location that is generally unchanged over a period of time.

4

In the arrangement of ALSs 110 shown in FIGS. 1 and 2, a minimum distance may be required among the ALSs 110x, 110y, and 110z (e.g., distance 220 between ALSs 110y and 110z) in order to distinguish the movement of the object 240. This minimum distance may generally be on the order of 2 centimeters (cm). More specifically, the minimum distance between ALSs 110 is based on an expected size of the object 240 as one factor. For example, when an open hand is used as the object 240, a greater minimum distance may be required to distinguish a gesture than when one finger is used as the object 240. This is because the open hand would cover all three ALSs 110x, 110y, 110z at more time instants such that a movement of the open hand could only be distinguished when the object 240 is at an edge of the set of ALSs 110x, 110y, 110z. According to one or more embodiments, the ALSs 110 may be positioned at the corners or along the edges of the screen 120 and, thus, the screen 120 size may determine the distance between the ALSs 110. When an open hand is anticipated to be the object 240 used to perform a gesture, a minimum distance between ALSs 110 of 3.5 cm may be used. The increased distance between ALSs 110 facilitates distinguishing the gesture (e.g., direction, speed) more clearly, because all ALSs 110 will not be covered by the open hand object 240 for the majority of the gesture movement.

Another distance that must be considered is the distance between the object 240 and the ALS 110 (e.g., distance 250 between the object 240 and ALS 110z). First, as FIG. 2 makes clear, the object 240 must be between the light source 210 and the ALSs 110 in order to be detected by one or more of the ALSs 110 based on the effect of the object 240 on light intensity 115 detected by one or more of the ALSs 110. While a minimum distance is generally not required between the object 240 and an ALS 110 (i.e. the object 240 may almost touch the screen 120 surface), the object 240 may generally be 2-3 cm away from the screen 120 while performing the gesture. When the object 240 is too close to the ALSs 110 (screen 120 surface), then some portion of the beginning or end of a gesture may not be detected. This is due to the fact that the width of the zone of reception of the ALSs 110 (as shown in the cross-sectional depiction of FIG. 2 by 230y and 230y' and by 230z and 230z', for example) is narrowest at the surface of the ALSs 110 and increases with increased distance from the ALSs. Thus, as is clear from FIG. 2, an object 240 that is closer in distance to an ALS 110 (screen 120 surface) must also be closer to a center of the ALS 110 (in the perpendicular dimension, along the screen 120) in order to enter the zone of reception of the ALS 110. By hovering the object 240 above a given ALS 110 and moving it farther away (reducing the object 240 effect and increasing light intensity 115 measurement) or closer together (increasing the object 240 effect and decreasing light intensity 115 measurement), a gesture analogous to a mouse click may be made. Thus, double-click and triple-click gestures may be added to available distinguishable gestures.

FIG. 3 shows a device 100 including an exemplary arrangement of ambient light sensors 110 according to another embodiment. The exemplary device 100 shown in FIG. 3 is similar to the device 100 shown in FIGS. 1 and 2 in that the screen 120 occupies most of one surface of the device 100. The device 100 shown in FIG. 3 includes seven ALSs 110a, 110b, 110c, 110d, 110e, 110f, 110g arranged around the perimeter of the screen 120. As shown in FIG. 3, ALS 110a is offset from a common axial line 111 of ALSs 110b, 110c, and 110d and also a common axial line 111' of ALSs 110e, 110f, and 110g. In alternate embodiments, one



5

or more of the ALSs 110b, 110c, and 110d or the ALSs 110e, 110f, and 110g may be disposed such that they are not linearly aligned with other ALSs 110 along 111 or 111', respectively. For example, both ALS 110c and ALS 110f may be disposed closer to the center of the screen 120 and, thus, offset from the axial line 111 common to ALSs 110b and 110d and the axial line 111' common to ALSs 110e and 110g, respectively. Increasing the number of ALSs 110 increases the number of gestures that may be detected by the device 100. For example, one waving gesture (movement of the object 240 from one side of the device 100 to the other) is illustrated by FIG. 3. Because of the number of ALSs 110 around the perimeter of the screen 120, other waving gestures, distinguishable from the waving gesture shown in FIG. 3, are also possible. The object 240 may move from ALSs 110d and 110e to ALS 110a, for example, or from ALS 110d to ALS 110g. It bears noting that, if the ALSs 110 were clustered closer together and the object 240 is a hand, as shown in FIG. 3, fewer distinguishable gestures are possible than when the ALSs 110 are disposed, as shown.

FIG. 4 shows a device 100 including an exemplary arrangement of ambient light sensors 110 according to yet another embodiment. Unlike the exemplary devices 100 shown in FIGS. 1-3, the device 100 shown in FIG. 4 includes a keyboard or other component in the space 410 such that the screen 120 occupies less of one surface of the device 100 relative to the screen 120 shown in FIGS. 1-3. Three ALSs 110m, 110n, 110o are shown near the perimeter of the screen 120. As noted above and shown in FIG. 1, the ALSs 110m, 110n, 110o may be disposed closer together so that the gestures made by the object 240 are more analogous to gestures a user of a touchpad may make with a finger.

FIG. 5 is a block diagram of a system 500 to process gestures. Functions performed by the system 500 are discussed below with reference to specific components. However, in alternate embodiments, the system 500 may process gestures using one or more processors and one or more memory devices that serve more than one of the functions discussed herein. In addition, the same processors and memory devices that process gestures as discussed below may perform other functions within the device 100. For example, the processor to identify gestures may be one of several digital signal processors (DSPs 801, FIG. 8) generally available in a smart phone or tablet.

An input to the system 500 is the light intensity 115 measured from each of the ALSs 110. The measurements are received by a data collection engine 510, which includes both memory and processor functionalities. As the light intensity 115 measurement data is received from each of the ALSs 110, the data collection engine 510 outputs a frame of data 520 for each time instant. That is, each frame of data 520 includes the light intensity 115 measurement for every ALS 110 at a given time instant. While each frame of data 520 may generally be discussed as including the light intensity 115 measurement for each ALS 110 at an instant of time, the ALSs 110 may instead sample light intensity 115 in turn (rather than simultaneously) such that a frame of data 520 includes light intensity 115 measurements for a period of time for one cycle of the ALSs 110. A processor functioning as a gesture identifier 530 receives each frame of data 520. The gesture identifier 530 may operate according to one of several embodiments as discussed below.

In order to identify a movement of the object 240 as a particular (known) gesture, the gesture identifier 530 uses a comparison of light intensity 115 measurements of the ALSs 110, as discussed below, along with a comparison with a gesture template 537 stored in a template memory device

6

535. A dynamically adjusted minimum change in light intensity 115 may be set based on expected noise and errors. That is, a threshold percentage of change in detected light intensity 115 may be required before it is interpreted as a true variation in ambient light. Based on the light intensity 115 measurements among the ALSs 110 within a frame of data 520 (for a single time instant or measurement cycle), the gesture identifier 530 may ascertain a position of the object 240. For example, for a given frame of data 520, if the light intensity 115 measurements of ALSs 110d and 110f are higher (by a defined threshold) than the light intensity 115 measurement output by ALS 110e, then the object 240 may be determined to be over the ALS 110e and, thereby, blocking some of the light from the light source 210. Based on the light intensity 115 measurements among two or more frames of data 520 (two or more time instants or measurement cycles), the gesture identifier 530 may ascertain characteristics of the (movement) gesture such as a direction of the movement, speed of the movement, and whether the movement is accelerating or decelerating. For example, if the light intensity 115 measurements of ALSs 110d and 110f are higher (by a defined threshold) than the light intensity 115 measurement output by ALS 110e in one frame of data 520 and the light intensity 115 measurement of ALS 110e is higher (by a defined threshold) than the light intensity 115 measurements output by ALSs 110d and 110f in the next frame of data 520, the gesture identifier 530 may ascertain that the object 240 moved from a direction of the ALS 110e toward a direction of the ALSs 110d and 110f. If the change in light intensity 115 measurements occurred over several frames of data 520, then the movement of the object 240 may be ascertained as being relatively slower than if the change occurred over the course of one frame of data 240. Based on the ascertained characteristics of the gesture, the gesture identifier 530 may identify the gesture among a set of known gestures based on the gesture template 537.

The gesture template 537 facilitates the association of a movement of the object 240 discerned by the gesture identifier 530 with a particular known gesture. The gesture template 537 may be regarded as a sample of ideal light intensity 115 measurement data corresponding with each known gesture. More specifically, the gesture template 537 may be regarded as providing the ideal relative light intensity 115 among the ALSs 110 or frames of data 520 or both for a given known gesture. Thus, by comparing the input light intensity 115 measurements (in the frames of data 520) or comparisons of light intensity measurements 115 with the ideal measurements in the gesture template 537, the gesture identifier 530 identifies the object 240 movement as a known gesture. This identification of the gesture may be done by a process of elimination of the known gestures in the gesture template 537. Thus, the gesture identifier 530 may identify the gesture using the gesture template 537, through a process of elimination of available known gestures, before the object 240 movement is complete. In this case, the gesture identifier 530 may continue to process frames of data 520 to verify the detected gesture or, in alternate embodiments, the gesture identifier 530 may stop processing additional frames of data 520 after identifying the gesture and wait for a trigger signal 540 discussed below. Each of the ALSs 110 may be programmable to provide 10, 20, 50, 100, 125, 150, 200 and 250 samples of light intensity 115 (frames of data 520) a second. The ALS 110 scanning rate is a factor in determining the speed at which a gesture may be made in order to be recognized. That is, when the ALSs 110 are sampling at a rate of 10 light intensity 115 samples per second, the fastest identifiable gesture is much slower than the fastest identi-



fiable gesture that may be made when the ALSs 110 are sampling at a rate of 250 light intensity 115 samples per second. The ALSs 115 sampling at a rate of 10 frames of data 520 per second (10 light intensity 115 samples per second each) may translate to an object 240 travelling 10 cm in 1.5 seconds in order to be recognized and processed properly. The system 610 (FIG. 6) may dynamically calculate and adjust the scanning rate of the ALSs 110.

Another input to the gesture identifier 530 is one of the gesture libraries 555 stored in a gesture library storage 550. Each gesture library 555 is associated with an application, and the gesture identifier 530 selects the gesture library 555 associated with the application currently being executed by the device 100. A given gesture library 555 associated with a given application may not include every known gesture in the gesture template 537. Thus, based on the application currently being executed by the device 100, the gesture identifier 530 may narrow down the set of known gestures within the gesture template 537 to compare against the frames of data 520 output by the data collection engine 510 in order to identify the gesture. A gesture library 555 indicates an action output 560 corresponding with a set of gestures. Thus, when the gesture identifier 530 identifies a known gesture based on the movement of the object 240 and the gesture template 537, and the gesture identifier 530 finds that known gesture among the set of gestures in a gesture library 555 associated with the application currently being run by the device 100, then the gesture identifier 530 outputs the corresponding action output 560 stemming from the object 240 movement. The action output 560 of the gesture identifier 530 acts as a command to the application being executed. For example, when the application being executed is a document editing session, the gestures identified by the gesture identifier 530 may correspond with action outputs 560 such as “next page” (wave down), “previous page” (wave up), “zoom in” (bringing fingers together), and “zoom out” (spreading fingers apart). If the device 100 is currently not executing any application or if the application currently being executed by the device 100 does not have a gesture library 555 associated with it, then, even if the gesture identifier 530 uses the gesture template 537 to identify a known gesture based on the movement of the object 240, no action is taken by the gesture identifier 530 based on identifying the gesture. That is, there is no action output 560 corresponding with the identified gesture, because there is no gesture library 555 to look up.

According to one embodiment, the gesture identifier 530 may not use the gesture template 537 to identify a gesture when no application is being executed by the device 100 or when an application without an associated gesture library 555 is being executed by the device 100. According to another embodiment, the gesture identifier 530 may not begin to process any frames of data 520 before receiving a trigger signal 540. The trigger signal 540 is detailed below with reference to FIG. 6. According to another embodiment, the gesture identifier 530 may process an initial set of frames of data 520 and then not process another set of frames of data 520 needed to identify the gesture until the trigger signal 540 is received. For example, the gesture identifier 530 may process a particular number of frames of data 520 or a number of frames of data 520 representing a particular length of time (number of time instants) and then stop processing further frames of data 520 until the trigger signal 540 is received. According to yet another embodiment, the gesture identifier 530 may continually process frames of data 520 as they are output from the data collection engine 510.

Regardless of the behavior of the gesture identifier 530 based on the trigger signal 540, the lack of an associated gesture library 555, or the lack of an application being executed at all, the data collection engine 510 still outputs the frames of data 520. This is because the light intensity 115 measurements may be used for background functions such as adjustment of the screen 120 backlighting, for example, based on the detected ambient light, even if gesture detection is not to be performed. Some of these background functions are detailed below with reference to FIG. 6.

FIG. 6 is a block diagram of a system 610 to control the two or more ambient light sensors 110. As noted with reference to FIG. 5, the functions described for the system 610 may be performed by one or more processors and one or more memory devices, which may also perform other functions within the device 100. The system 610 may be regarded as a background processing system, because it may operate continuously to dynamically control the ALSs 110. The system 610 receives the light intensity 115 measurements output by the ALSs 110 to the data collection engine 510 as frames of data 520. In alternate embodiments, the ALSs 110 may directly output light intensity 115 measurements to the system 610 as well as to the data collection engine 510. The system 610 may also receive additional information 620. This additional information 620 may indicate, for example, whether the device 100 is currently executing an application and, if so, which application the device 100 is currently executing.

Based on the light intensity 115 measurements (directly or in the form of frames of data 520) and the additional information 620, the system 610 adjusts the sensitivity or wavelength band or range or both for each ALS 110. For example, based on the available light (measured ambient light intensity 115), the system 610 may change the wavelength range for the ALSs 110 via a control signal 630 from the system 610 to one or more of the ALSs 110. The change (adjustment of wavelength range) may ensure that the ALSs 110 are focused in the correct wavelength (frequency) band for the current conditions. As another example, based on a change in available light (e.g., based on switching a light on or off), the system 610 may change the sensitivity of the ALSs 110. Any order of switching lights produces a new range of change in light intensity 115 to which the ALSs 110 must adapt. For example, the range of change of light intensity 115 to which the ALSs 110 are sensitive may be 50-250 lux. In a darker environment (e.g., a conference room during a presentation) the range of change of light intensity 115 to which the ALSs 110 are sensitive may be 2-15 lux. The adjustment of the ALSs 110 through the control signal 630 may be done continuously, periodically, or based on a trigger event such as, for example, a change in the application being executed by the device 100. For example, sensitivity adjustment may be done automatically once for every 5 frames of data 520. The system 610 may also adjust the order and frequency of light intensity 115 measurements by the ALSs 110. For example, based on additional information 620 indicating that a particular application is being executed by the device 100, the system 610 may send control signals 630 to have the ALSs 110 collect light intensity 115 samples for each cycle (frame of data 520) in a particular order and with a particular frequency.

In addition to controlling the ALSs 110, the system 610 may provide the trigger signal 540 to the gesture identifier 530 (see FIG. 5). Because the system 610 monitors the light intensity 115 measurements in the frames of data 520 to fulfill the background functions described above, the system 610 may additionally identify trigger events that signal when



gesture processing should be initiated by the gesture identifier **530** and output the trigger signal **540** accordingly. For example, the system **610** may output a trigger signal **540** to the gesture identifier **530** when it receives a frame of data **520** that indicates a change in light intensity **115** measured by one or more ALSs **110**. The change in light intensity **115** measurement may indicate a start of a movement of an object **240** and, thus, the start of a gesture. In various embodiments, the change in measured light intensity **115** may be 10%+/-3% or higher before the system **610** outputs a trigger signal **540**. In an embodiment, the change in measured light intensity **115** may be 20%+/-5% or higher before the system **610** outputs a trigger signal **540**. In an embodiment, the change in measured light intensity may be 25%+/-5% or higher before the system **610** outputs a trigger signal **540**.

FIG. 7 shows the process flow of a method **700** of detecting a gesture according to embodiments discussed above. At block **710**, arranging two or more ALSs **110** under the screen **120** of a device **100** may be according to the embodiments shown in FIGS. 1, 3, and 4 or in alternate arrangements according to the guidelines discussed above. Obtaining light intensity **115** measurements from the ALSs **110** (block **720**) may be in photometric or radiometric units as discussed above. Obtaining (receiving) the light intensity **115** measurements may also include dynamically controlling the ALSs **110** with the system **610** to modify the wavelength range or spectral sensitivity of each ALS **110**, for example. As discussed with reference to FIG. 6, the control by the system **610** may be based on light intensity **115** measurements by the ALSs **110**, for example. Determining what, if any, application is being executed by the device **100**, at block **730**, may be done by the gesture identifier **530** and may be part of the additional information **620** provided to the system **610**. At block **740**, the process includes storing a gesture library **555** associated with each application that may be operated using touch-less gestures in the gesture library storage **550**. Selecting the gesture library **555** associated with the application being executed by the device **100** may be done by the gesture identifier **530** at block **750**. Block **750** may also include the gesture identifier **530** determining that no gesture library **555** is applicable because the device **100** is not executing any application or is executing an application without an associated gesture library **555**. At block **760**, processing the light intensity **115** measurements and identifying a gesture involves the data collection engine **510** outputting the frames of data **520** and the gesture identifier **530** using a comparison of light intensity **115** measurements in addition to the gesture template **537**. Block **760** may also include the system **610** sending a trigger signal **540** to the gesture identifier **530** to begin or continue the gesture processing. Block **760** may further include the gesture identifier **530** not identifying the gesture at all based on not having a gesture library **555** available. At block **770**, outputting an action signal **560** corresponding with the gesture based on the gesture library **555** is done by the gesture identifier **530** as detailed above.

FIG. 8 is a block diagram of an exemplary device **100** that facilitates touch-less gesture detection as described in embodiments above. While various components of the device **100** are depicted, alternate embodiments of the device **100** may include a subset of the components shown or include additional components not shown in FIG. 8. The device **100** includes a DSP **801** and a memory **802**. The DSP **801** and memory **802** may provide, in part or in whole, the functionality of the system **500** (FIG. 5). As shown, the device **100** may further include an antenna and front-end

unit **803**, a radio frequency (RF) transceiver **804**, an analog baseband processing unit **805**, a microphone **806**, an ear-piece speaker **807**, a headset port **808**, a bus **809**, such as a system bus or an input/output (I/O) interface bus, a removable memory card **810**, a universal serial bus (USB) port **811**, an alert **812**, a keypad **813**, a short range wireless communication sub-system **814**, a liquid crystal display (LCD) **815**, which may include a touch sensitive surface, an LCD controller **816**, a charge-coupled device (CCD) camera **817**, a camera controller **818**, and a global positioning system (GPS) sensor **819**, and a power management module **820** operably coupled to a power storage unit, such as a battery **826**. In various embodiments, the device **100** may include another kind of display that does not provide a touch sensitive screen. In one embodiment, the DSP **801** communicates directly with the memory **802** without passing through the input/output interface ("Bus") **809**.

In various embodiments, the DSP **801** or some other form of controller or central processing unit (CPU) operates to control the various components of the device **100** in accordance with embedded software or firmware stored in memory **802** or stored in memory contained within the DSP **801** itself. In addition to the embedded software or firmware, the DSP **801** may execute other applications stored in the memory **802** or made available via information media such as portable data storage media like the removable memory card **810** or via wired or wireless network communications. The application software may comprise a compiled set of machine-readable instructions that configure the DSP **801** to provide the desired functionality, or the application software may be high-level software instructions to be processed by an interpreter or compiler to indirectly configure the DSP **801**.

The antenna and front-end unit **803** may be provided to convert between wireless signals and electrical signals, enabling the device **100** to send and receive information from a cellular network or some other available wireless communications network or from a peer device **100**. In an embodiment, the antenna and front-end unit **803** may include multiple antennas to support beam forming and/or multiple input multiple output (MIMO) operations. As is known to those skilled in the art, MIMO operations may provide spatial diversity, which can be used to overcome difficult channel conditions or to increase channel throughput. Likewise, the antenna and front-end unit **803** may include antenna tuning or impedance matching components, RF power amplifiers, or low noise amplifiers.

In various embodiments, the RF transceiver **804** facilitates frequency shifting, converting received RF signals to baseband and converting baseband transmit signals to RF. In some descriptions a radio transceiver or RF transceiver may be understood to include other signal processing functionality such as modulation/demodulation, coding/decoding, interleaving/deinterleaving, spreading/despreading, inverse fast Fourier transforming (IFFT)/fast Fourier transforming (FFT), cyclic prefix appending/removal, and other signal processing functions. For the purposes of clarity, the description here separates the description of this signal processing from the RF and/or radio stage and conceptually allocates that signal processing to the analog baseband processing unit **805** or the DSP **801** or other central processing unit. In some embodiments, the RF Transceiver **804**, portions of the antenna and front-end unit **803**, and the analog base band processing unit **805** may be combined in one or more processing units and/or application specific integrated circuits (ASICs).



## 11

Note that, in this diagram, the radio access technology (RAT) RAT1 and RAT2 transceivers **821**, **822**, the IXRF **823**, the IRSL **824** and Multi-RAT subsystem **825** are operably coupled to the RF transceiver **804** and analog baseband processing unit **805** and then also coupled to the antenna and front-end unit **803** via the RF transceiver **804**. As there may be multiple RAT transceivers, there will typically be multiple antennas or front ends **803** or RF transceivers **804**, one for each RAT or band of operation.

The analog baseband processing unit **805** may provide various analog processing of inputs and outputs for the RF transceivers **804** and the speech interfaces (**806**, **807**, **808**). For example, the analog baseband processing unit **805** receives inputs from the microphone **806** and the headset **808** and provides outputs to the earpiece **807** and the headset **808**. To that end, the analog baseband processing unit **805** may have ports for connecting to the built-in microphone **806** and the earpiece speaker **807** that enable the device **100** to be used as a cell phone. The analog baseband processing unit **805** may further include a port for connecting to a headset or other hands-free microphone and speaker configuration. The analog baseband processing unit **805** may provide digital-to-analog conversion in one signal direction and analog-to-digital conversion in the opposing signal direction. In various embodiments, at least some of the functionality of the analog baseband processing unit **805** may be provided by digital processing components, for example by the DSP **801** or by other central processing units.

The DSP **801** may perform modulation/demodulation, coding/decoding, interleaving/deinterleaving, spreading/despreading, inverse fast Fourier transforming (IFFT)/fast Fourier transforming (FFT), cyclic prefix appending/removal, and other signal processing functions associated with wireless communications. In an embodiment, for example in a code division multiple access (CDMA) technology application, for a transmitter function the DSP **801** may perform modulation, coding, interleaving, and spreading, and for a receiver function the DSP **801** may perform despreading, deinterleaving, decoding, and demodulation. In another embodiment, for example in an orthogonal frequency division multiplex access (OFDMA) technology application, for the transmitter function the DSP **801** may perform modulation, coding, interleaving, inverse fast Fourier transforming, and cyclic prefix appending, and for a receiver function the DSP **801** may perform cyclic prefix removal, fast Fourier transforming, deinterleaving, decoding, and demodulation. In other wireless technology applications, yet other signal processing functions and combinations of signal processing functions may be performed by the DSP **801**.

The DSP **801** may communicate with a wireless network via the analog baseband processing unit **805**. In some embodiments, the communication may provide Internet connectivity, enabling a user to gain access to content on the Internet and to send and receive e-mail or text messages. The input/output interface ("Bus") **809** interconnects the DSP **801** and various memories and interfaces. The memory **802** and the removable memory card **810** may provide software and data to configure the operation of the DSP **801**. Among the interfaces may be the USB interface **811** and the short range wireless communication sub-system **814**. The USB interface **811** may be used to charge the device **100** and may also enable the device **100** to function as a peripheral device to exchange information with a personal computer or other computer system. The short range wireless communication sub-system **814** may include an infrared port, a Bluetooth interface, an IEEE 802.11 compliant wireless interface, or any other short range wireless communication sub-system,

## 12

which may enable the device to communicate wirelessly with other nearby client nodes and access nodes. The short-range wireless communication sub-system **814** may also include suitable RF Transceiver, Antenna and Front End subsystems.

The input/output interface ("Bus") **809** may further connect the DSP **801** to the alert **812** that, when triggered, causes the device **100** to provide a notice to the user, for example, by ringing, playing a melody, or vibrating. The alert **812** may serve as a mechanism for alerting the user to any of various events such as an incoming call, a new text message, and an appointment reminder by silently vibrating, or by playing a specific pre-assigned melody for a particular caller.

The keypad **813** couples to the DSP **801** via the I/O interface ("Bus") **809** to provide one mechanism for the user to make selections, enter information, and otherwise provide input to the device **100**. The keypad **813** may be a full or reduced alphanumeric keyboard such as QWERTY, DVORAK, AZERTY and sequential types, or a traditional numeric keypad with alphabet letters associated with a telephone keypad. The input keys may likewise include a track wheel, track pad, an exit or escape key, a trackball, and other navigational or functional keys, which may be inwardly depressed to provide further input function. Another input mechanism may be the LCD **815**, which may include touch screen capability and also display text and/or graphics to the user. The LCD controller **816** couples the DSP **801** to the LCD **815**.

The CCD camera **817**, if equipped, enables the device **100** to make digital pictures. The DSP **801** communicates with the CCD camera **817** via the camera controller **818**. In another embodiment, a camera operating according to a technology other than Charge Coupled Device cameras may be employed. The GPS sensor **819** is coupled to the DSP **801** to decode global positioning system signals or other navigational signals, thereby enabling the device **100** to determine its position. The GPS sensor **819** may be coupled to an antenna and front end (not shown) suitable for its band of operation. Various other peripherals may also be included to provide additional functions, such as radio and television reception.

In various embodiments, device **100** comprises a first Radio Access Technology (RAT) transceiver **821** and a second RAT transceiver **822**. As shown in FIG. 16, and described in greater detail herein, the RAT transceivers '1' **821** and '2' **822** are in turn coupled to a multi-RAT communications subsystem **825** by an Inter-RAT Supervisory Layer Module **824**. In turn, the multi-RAT communications subsystem **825** is operably coupled to the Bus **809**. Optionally, the respective radio protocol layers of the first Radio Access Technology (RAT) transceiver **821** and the second RAT transceiver **822** are operably coupled to one another through an Inter-RAT eXchange Function (IRXF) Module **823**.

According to embodiments discussed above, the arrangement and combined use of two or more ALSs **110** facilitates the detection of characteristics of movement of an object **240**. These characteristics may be used by the gesture identifier **530** to identify a gesture made by the object **240**, for example. Further embodiments, discussed below, detail the control of ALSs **110** that facilitates addressing issues associated with traditional ALS **110** arrangements and uses (e.g., flicker or smudge effects).

FIG. 9 shows exemplary sampling patterns **910** for ALSs **110**. As noted above with reference to FIG. 6 and FIG. 7 (block **720**), the system **610** and, more particularly, one or



13

more processors of the system 610 may control the ALSs 110. The system 610 may adjust the order and frequency of light intensity 115 measurements by each of the ALSs 110 in addition to controlling their sensitivity and waveform band. The exemplary sampling patterns 910 shown in FIG. 9 include light intensity 115<sub>w</sub>, 115<sub>x</sub>, 115<sub>y</sub>, 115<sub>z</sub> measurements from four ALSs 110. As noted previously, fewer or more ALSs 110 may be arranged within the device 100 according to various embodiments. While four exemplary patterns 910a, 910b, 910c, 910d are detailed herein, any combination or variation on the patterns 910 is also contemplated.

One exemplary pattern 910a involves each of the four ALSs obtaining light intensity 115<sub>w</sub>, 115<sub>x</sub>, 115<sub>y</sub>, 115<sub>z</sub> measurements in immediate succession from one another for each measurement cycle (frame of data 520a) with a period of time 920-1 or 920-2 between each frame of data 520a resulting from each measurement cycle of the ALSs 110. The periods of time 920-1 and 920-2 between the frames of data 520a are controllable by the system 610. Thus, the periods of time 920-1 and 920-2 may be the same or may be different. According to another exemplary pattern 910b, the time period 930 between light intensity 115 measurements within a frame of data 520b is the same as the time period 940 between the last light intensity 115<sub>z</sub> measurement of a frame of data 520b and the first light intensity 115<sub>w</sub> measurement of the next frame of data 520b. The exemplary pattern 910c illustrates that the period between light intensity 115 measurements within a frame of data 520 as well as between frames of data 520 is adjustable by the system 610. The time 960-1 between the first pair of frames of data 520c-1 and 520c-2 may be different than the time 960-2 between the next pair of frames of data 520c-2 and 520c-3. In addition, the time 950-1 between light intensity 115<sub>y</sub> and 115<sub>z</sub> measurements in the first frame of data 520c-1 may be different than either or both of the time 950-2 between light intensity 115<sub>x</sub> and 115<sub>y</sub> measurements in the second frame of data 520c-2 and the time 950-3 between light intensity 115<sub>y</sub> and 115<sub>z</sub> measurements in the third frame of data 520c-3. The exemplary pattern 910d further illustrates that the system 610 may change the sampling of light intensity 115 by each of the ALSs 110 between or during execution of a particular application by the device 100. According to the pattern 910d, all four ALSs 110 simultaneously measure light intensity 115<sub>w</sub>, 115<sub>x</sub>, 115<sub>y</sub>, 115<sub>z</sub> to provide the first two frames of data 520d. In the third frame of data 520d, two of the light intensity 115<sub>w</sub>, 115<sub>x</sub> measurements are taken simultaneously. In the next measurement cycle making up the fourth frame of data 520d, based on control by the system 610, all of the ALSs 110 sample light intensity 115<sub>w</sub>, 115<sub>x</sub>, 115<sub>y</sub>, 115<sub>z</sub> in turn.

The illustrative patterns 910 in FIG. 9 indicate some of the types of sampling parameters the system 610 may control. The arrangement and control of ALSs 110 according to embodiments discussed herein address factors to which traditional ALS 110 arrangement and use has been susceptible. For example, when two or more ALSs 110 are used and are controlled to sample light intensity 115 at different times (though they may be used simultaneously), ac flicker is not likely to affect the light intensity 115 measurements from both ALSs 110. As a result, the flicker is recognizable and can be ignored. Additionally, when the light intensity 115 measurement of one ALS 110 is affected by a smudge or fingerprint on the screen 120 (light intensity 115 measurement reduced), the light intensity 115 measurements from the other ALSs 110 would indicate that there was no actual reduction in ambient light. False alarms that may erroneously indicate a drop in available light levels based on a

14

movement in front of the device 100 are also addressed based on using multiple ALSs 110 and by processing frames of data 520 obtained using sampling patterns 910 such as those shown in FIG. 9. Processing to determine if the backlight needs to be adjusted and additional processing would be performed. The processing to determine if the backlight needs to be adjusted would indicate the false alarm. For example, the frequency of sampling of light intensity 115 by each ALS 110 may be increased to ascertain the movement affecting each of the ALSs 110 differently. The additional processing based on movement would be the gesture detection process described above. Thus, based on the application being executed, when the movement does not correspond with a gesture in the associated gesture library 555, the movement may be ignored.

FIG. 10 illustrates a cross-sectional view of one ALS 110 according to an embodiment. FIG. 10 shows a device 100 similar to the one shown in FIG. 1 with the ALS 110x shown in a cross-sectional view. The view of the ALS 110x shows a narrowed viewing angle (pipe diameter 1010 or pd) based on a pipe 1015 structure as compared to the zone of reception (window width 1020 or w), which is also shown and discussed with reference to FIG. 2, for example. This pipe diameter 1010 (pd) may be 0.75 millimeters (mm), for example, and the ALS 110x may have a height (h) of 0.85 mm, for example. Then the reduced viewing angle at the screen 120 surface (distance 1030) is given by:

$$x = d * \tan(\alpha) \quad [\text{Eq. 1}]$$

where x is the distance 1030, d is the distance from the top of the ALS 110x to the surface of the screen 120 (1050), and  $\alpha$  is the angle 1040, which is the half-angle of the cone-shaped region. When the half-angle of the cone-shaped region (1040) is 60 degrees, the distance 1030 x is (1.73)\*d according to Equation 1. When the half-angle of the cone-shaped region (1040) is 40 degrees, the distance 1030 x is (0.84)\*d according to Equation 1. As Equation 1 indicates, as the half-angle of the cone-shaped region (1040) decreases and the distance 1050 (d) decreases, the distance 1030 x decreases proportionately. Accordingly, even without the pipe 1015 structure, ALSs 110 arranged in proximity to each other may not have overlapping zones of reception in some cases.

When the ALSs 110 are arranged in proximity to each other, as in the arrangement shown in FIG. 1 or 10 in comparison to the arrangement shown in FIG. 3, the narrower (cylindrical rather than cone-shaped) viewing angle ensures that the zones of reception of the ALSs 110 do not overlap. When the zone of reception of each ALS 110 is separate from the zone of reception of every other ALS 110, the direction of the source of ambient light may be determined. That is, for example, when the ALSs 110x, 110y, 110z shown in FIG. 10 have viewing angles equivalent to the pipe diameter 1010 (pd) shown, for example, 0.75 mm, then a comparison of the light intensity 115 measured by each ALS 110x, 110y, 110z may indicate a position of a light source. For example, when a lamp is positioned next to ALS 110z, the light intensity 115 measured by ALS 110z may be higher than the light intensity 115 measured by the other ALSs 110x, 110y.

While several embodiments have been provided in the present disclosure, it should be understood that the disclosed systems and methods may be embodied in many other specific forms without departing from the spirit or scope of the present disclosure. The present examples are to be considered as illustrative and not restrictive, and the intention is not to be limited to the details given herein. For



15

example, the various elements or components may be combined or integrated in another system or certain features may be omitted, or not implemented.

Also, techniques, systems, subsystems and methods described and illustrated in the various embodiments as discrete or separate may be combined or integrated with other systems, modules, techniques, or methods without departing from the scope of the present disclosure. Other items shown or discussed as coupled or directly coupled or communicating with each other may be indirectly coupled or communicating through some interface, device, or intermediate component, whether electrically, mechanically, or otherwise. Other examples of changes, substitutions, and alterations are ascertainable by one skilled in the art and could be made without departing from the spirit and scope disclosed herein.

What is claimed is:

1. A device to control measurements of light intensity, the device comprising:

two or more ambient light sensors arranged at respective surface locations of the device, each of the two or more ambient light sensors configured to measure the light intensity at the respective surface location; and

a processor configured to control operation of the two or more ambient light sensors according to a sampling pattern wherein the two or more ambient light sensors measure light intensity simultaneously or in sequence with one another, wherein the processor is further configured to detect a touch-less gesture made by an object in touch-less communication with the device based on the light intensity measurements, wherein the touch-less gesture is detected in three dimensions between an ambient light source and the two or more ambient light sensors.

2. The device according to claim 1, wherein the processor controls the two or more ambient light sensors based on an application being executed by the device such that during execution of the application, the two or more ambient light sensors collect a plurality of light intensity samples per measurement cycle in a particular order and/or with a particular frequency.

3. The device according to claim 1, wherein the processor adjusts one of a sensitivity level or a wavelength band of the two or more ambient light sensors based on previous measurements of the light intensity by the two or more ambient light sensors.

4. The device according to claim 1, wherein the processor changes a frequency of the light intensity measurements by the two or more ambient light sensors such that the two or more ambient light sensors obtain more or less light intensity samples per second after changing the frequency.

5. The device according to claim 1, wherein the processor changes a sequence of the light intensity measurements by the two or more ambient light sensors such that the two or more ambient light sensors measure light intensity in a different order than prior to changing the sequence.

6. The device according to claim 1, wherein the processor controls the two or more ambient light sensors to separately measure light intensity for a first set of measurement cycles, and wherein, responsive to detecting that an ambient light level is below a minimum threshold level, the processor controls the two or more ambient light sensors to measure the light intensity simultaneously for a second set of measurement cycles.

7. The device according to claim 1, wherein the processor controls the two or more ambient light sensors to measure the light intensity in a sequence such that the two or more

16

ambient light sensors separately measure light intensity at different times than one another, and wherein the processor is configured to compare separate light intensity measurements from each of the two or more ambient light sensors in order to recognize at least one of AC ripple, false readings, or screen smudge.

8. The device according to claim 1, wherein the two or more ambient light sensors detect the light intensity using narrow viewing angles that define cylindrical-shaped zones of reception rather than cone-shaped zones of reception, wherein the narrow viewing angles are configured such that the cylindrical-shaped zones of reception do not overlap with another.

9. The device according to claim 8, wherein the two or more ambient light sensors indicate a direction of a light source relative to the device based on separate light intensity measurements, and wherein the two or more ambient light sensors comprise three ambient light sensors arranged in a triangular pattern.

10. A method of controlling measurements of light intensity in a device, the method comprising:

measuring, using two or more ambient light sensors arranged at respective surface locations of the device, the light intensity at the respective surface locations; controlling an operation of the two or more ambient light sensors according to a sampling pattern wherein the two or more ambient light sensors measure light intensity simultaneously or in sequence with one another; and

detecting a touch-less gesture made by an object in touch-less communication with the device based on the light intensity measurements, wherein the touch-less gesture is detected in three dimensions between an ambient light source and the two or more ambient light sensors.

11. The method according to claim 10, further comprising receiving information to indicate an application being executed by the device, and responsively controlling operation of the two or more ambient light sensors to collect a plurality of light intensity samples per measurement cycle in a particular order and/or with a particular frequency based on the application being executed.

12. The method according to claim 10, further comprising determining a change in ambient light based on previous measurements of the light intensity by the two or more ambient light sensors, and adjusting one of a sensitivity level or a wavelength band of the two or more ambient light sensors based on the change.

13. The method according to claim 10, wherein the controlling the operation of the two or more ambient light sensors includes changing a frequency of the light intensity measurements by the two or more ambient light sensors such that the two or more ambient light sensors obtain more or less light intensity samples per second after changing the frequency.

14. The method according to claim 10, wherein the controlling the operation of the two or more ambient light sensors includes changing a sequence of the light intensity measurements by the two or more ambient light sensors such that the two or more ambient light sensors measure light intensity in a different order than prior to changing the sequence.

15. The method according to claim 10, wherein the controlling the operation of the two or more ambient light sensors includes controlling the two or more ambient light



17

sensors to measure light intensity simultaneously in response to detecting that an ambient light level is below a minimum threshold level.

16. The method according to claim 10, wherein the controlling the operation of the two or more ambient light sensors includes controlling the two or more ambient light sensors to measure the light intensity in a sequence such that the two or more ambient light sensors separately measure light intensity at different times than one another, wherein the device is configured to compare separate light intensity measurements from each of the two or more ambient light sensors in order to detect AC ripple, false readings, and/or screen smudge.

17. The method according to claim 10, wherein the two or more ambient light sensors comprise three ambient light sensors arranged in a triangular pattern, and when ambient light measured by one of the ambient lights sensors falls below a minimum threshold, light intensity measurements from the other two ambient light sensors are used to detect an actual reduction in ambient light.

18. The method according to claim 10, wherein the two or more ambient light sensors detect the light intensity using narrow viewing angles that defines cylindrical-shaped zones of reception rather than cone-shaped zones of reception, wherein the narrow viewing angles are configured such that the cylindrical-shaped zones of reception do not overlap with another.

19. The method according to claim 18, further comprising determining a direction of a light source relative to the device based on separate light intensity measurements.

\* \* \* \* \*

18